



State of Connecticut COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 2, Hartford, CT 06103

Promoting Equality and Justice for all People

Education Committee Public Hearing – March 3, 2021

CHRO Testimony Regarding:

SB 948 – AA Addressing Education Funding and Racial Equity in Connecticut

Senator McCrory, Representative Sanchez, Senator Berthel, Representative McCarty, and members of the Education Committee, the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities appreciates the chance to submit testimony in support of SB 948, An Act Addressing Education Funding and Racial Equity in Connecticut.

As the state entity charged with enforcing Connecticut's antidiscrimination statutes, including those protecting students, the Commission is well aware of the racial and economic inequities that persist in the state's education system. The \$639 million racial funding gap¹ in the education funding system is yet another indication of how the current system is failing students of color. This funding gap translates to school districts with majority BIPOC populations spending approximately \$2,300 less per student than majority white districts.² The Commission is supportive of this bill's aim to deal with these inequities, in part by reducing this racial funding gap by 68%. The bill also increases the English Learner and Concentrated Poverty weights in the Education Cost Sharing formula, further addressing the disparities that exist under the current funding system.

Reducing the racial disparities in education funding is a critical step towards addressing the longstanding racial and economic barriers that exist in Connecticut. The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities encourages the Education Committee to support this important bill.

¹ School and State Finance Project. (2020). *Racial Disparities in Connecticut Education Funding*. New Haven, CT: Author. Retrieved from <http://ctschoolfinance.org/resources/uploads/files/Racial-Disparities-in-CT-Education-Funding.pdf>.

² Ibid.